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Watson's Art Journal.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOV. 16, 1867.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, CLINTON HALL, ASTOR PLACE.

NOTICE.—The Publication Office of the ART-JOURNAL, will be, after this date, in Clinton Hall Building, Astor Place, next door to the Savings Bank, where subscriptions and advertisements will be received.

Editorial Rooms, 806 Broadway.

Advertisements for the current week, must be sent in before noon on Friday.

MUSICAL AGENCY.—Frequent applications are made to us, for musicians in the various branches of the profession, Opera, Concerts, the Church, Teaching, &c. Parties who desire to be entered upon our register, can do so by applying at our business office, Clinton Buildings, Astor Place.

AMUSEMENTS OF THE WEEK.

The two great features of the present week, aside from the Arion Concert, were, first, the production of Gounod's new opera, "Romeo and Juliet," at the Academy of Music last evening—Friday—and secondly, the first Philharmonic Concert, also at the Academy of Music, which will take place this evening. Both performances, however, took place too late to be noticed in the present number, but they will be reviewed at length in our next issue.

The celebrated Arion Society, gave their first concert of the present season, on Thursday evening last, before a large and brilliant audience. The attractions, besides the splendid singing of the "Arions," were the appearance of that fine artist, Madame Kapp-Young, and the first public *début* of a young pianist, Mlle. Alida Topp.

A fine orchestra, under the direction of Carl Bergmann, executed Bargiel's "Prometheus" overture, introduction to Wagner's "Lohngrin," and Weber's "Jubilee" overture, in that masterly style which ever distinguishes the instrumental performances directed by Mr. Bergmann.

The Arion Society acquitted itself with high honor on this occasion. It executed the male quartette, "Roth Traut," by Veit, Ritter's "Abscheid," by Kinkel, which was enthusiastically encored, and a composition by Wagner, with orchestral accompaniment, entitled "Liebesmahl der Apostel—the Eucharist," which reminds us strongly of the Tannhauser March, and needs at least four or five hundred voices to give it its full effect. The singing of all these pieces proved fully that the Arion Society ranks with the Leiderkranz, as the first singing society in the

country. We regretted, however, to observe that, from some cause or other, the ranks of the Arion were not on this occasion as full as usual.

Mme. Kapp-Young appeared for the first time in the concert room, in America, and, unlike most operatic singers, did full justice to the high reputation she has already acquired on the lyric stage.

The keen excitement of the evening was the appearance of a young German lady, whose fame as a pianist has preceded her in this country. Mlle. Alida Topp is very young, being scarcely eighteen years of age, and is a pupil of the celebrated Hans von Bulow, who endorses her as among the first living pianists. On this occasion she played Liszt's Concerto in E flat, and Chopin's Ballade in G minor, two selections which would be received as test pieces by the most exigeant audiences. She executed them in a very perfect and brilliant manner, and with a force which would seem to be impossible to one of her delicate physique. She has wonderful facility in execution, attacking the most difficult passages with intrepidity, unfailing certainty, and brilliant success. In delicacy of execution, she is also a perfect master, and in points of finish there is nothing to be desired. We shall have more to say of Miss Topp, but prefer, before we venture some points of exception, to hear her once again. We can say, however, without reservation, that she is the finest lady pianist that ever visited this country, and that, in certain respects, she has no superior and few equals in America.

Mr. Oscar M. Newell's Concert.—This gentleman gave a concert at the National Hall, Harlem, on Wednesday evening, which was attended by a large and very fashionable audience.

Mr. Newell is a young pianist of very great promise, who has made rapid strides in his art in a very brief space of time. During the few months he has been studying with Mr. J. N. Pattison, his whole manner and method has been changed, and it may be truly said, that he is now on a path, which if he pursues earnestly, but patiently, will surely lead him to high distinction. Mr. Newell played two of Mr. J. N. Pattison's difficult, but effective concert pieces, and he played them brilliantly and effectively. His technique is, in most points, excellent, and he is now able to give out a theme broadly and intelligently, which is an accomplishment that greater artists have failed in. He has one excellent fault—paradoxical, but true—that of perfect deliberateness. Nervousness or over-anxiety, he seems to be unacquainted with; what he studies he remembers, and what he has thoroughly learned, he can reproduce. Such a temperament can accomplish anything, if sustained by earnest enthusiasm. We must compliment Mr. Newell

on his marked improvement, at the same time that we urge him to remember that the path for labor lies extended before him, and that the goal of true ambition is still far away in the dim horizon. Mr. Newell was very warmly applauded and encored, and altogether made a decided success.

We should advise Mr. O. M. Newell to abstain from producing his vocal compositions until he has submitted them to an experienced master. As we heard them on Wednesday evening, they were terribly crude and scholarish, and were very ineffective. Rome, however, was not built in a day, and Mr. Newell must be content to destroy many such compositions, before the result of his labors in vocal writing will be found acceptable.

Mrs. Farnham, who has a widely-spread reputation in private society, assisted on this occasion, and did herself much credit. She has a fine, clear and powerful voice, and sings with dash and brilliancy. She falls, however, into one very common error, that of trilling on the wrong interval, which, though apparently acceptable to the general ear, is very unpleasant to those who know. The error is one that can be self-corrected with merely ordinary care. Mrs. Farnham was tastefully and richly dressed, and proved a brilliant feature in the programme. She was very deservedly honored with *encores*. The other vocal assistants do not merit any special mention.

It is understood that the house of William Hall & Son, the sole publishers of the compositions of William Vincent Wallace, has made arrangements with Max Mazetek to produce Wallace's beautiful romantic opera, *Lurline*, in Italian and English, alternately, at the Academy of Music, in February next. This is good news for all lovers of true art, for the opera of *Lurline* is a masterpiece, and, as a musical event, is as important as the production of Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine*, or Gordon's *Romeo and Juliet*. We shall have much to say on this subject in a few weeks.

The Mendelssohn Union will give its first concert on the 28th of December, and on that occasion they will produce George F. Bristow's new oratorio, "Daniel," which they have been rehearsing for some weeks. The beauties of the work become more prominent with each hearing, and we hazard nothing in saying, that its production will add great brilliance to the high reputation which Mr. Bristow has already acquired by his works. The Mendelssohn Union already sing the choruses grandly. They have fine, fresh voices, and they have real enthusiasm in their work. With such material they cannot fail to command success.

Music at St. John's Church.—In all the musical art with which New York is now literally teeming, no greater advance has been made than that of the service of Trinity Parish

during the time Dr. James Pech has been connected with the direction of musical affairs in that Parish. The service of yesterday, with many previous ones, owe a considerable portion of their perfection to his care and industry.

The papers of this morning speak in the highest praise of the choir at St. John's, and of their magnificent performance of the music; and we further add our testimony to that of our contemporaries in stating that, in this particular style of church music, the performance of yesterday was unique.

From a note quoted at the bottom of the service list, we extract the following short but interesting account of the service—Jackson in F—as performed yesterday morning:

Jackson's performance is one originally composed for performance in the Cathedral Church of Exeter, England, on the occasion of the union of the clergy and the choirs, from the various rural deaneries throughout the Diocese, with that of the Cathedral, when at stated periods during the year, a performance by the whole was given in the Metropolitan Church. The service is written in five real parts; but there is no attempt at anything beyond the simplest counterpoint.

The anthem, however, was omitted, at the request of the Bishop, much to the disappointment of many who had come from great distances to hear a complete service.

The following is an extract from the *Tribune* referring to the matter, which explains more than it is necessary for us to write at present:

"The High Church members complain because the anthem—

'As pants the heart for cooling streams,
When heated in the chase,
So longs my soul, O God, for Thee,
And thy refreshing grace—'

was left out of the services. They say that it was arranged by the admirers of the reverend Doctor Tyng that this anthem should be omitted, and a poor, miserable hymn, such as can be sung in any village choir, should be substituted in its stead. They add that God ought to be worshipped in the grandest and most impressive manner, and they hold that it is an insult to the Great Jehovah to offer commonplace music, especially on occasions like this. The organist who performed yesterday has spent years in perfecting himself in his divine art, and should have the selections left entirely to his choice."

Suffice it to say, that anything which tends to rob the power of the Church of its legitimate music is an exhibition of a taste of a questionable order.

The Rev. Dr. Dix, rector of Trinity parish, fosters and nurtures this School of Music with all the tenderness and care of which it is susceptible. The attention which Cathedral music offers over "Gregorian," or what is understood "Ritualistic" music, is, that it not only appeals to the emotions, but, what is of much higher importance, to the heart and head.

The great body of the Diocesan clergy, on arriving in this metropolis, naturally look to Trinity Parish for a standard of excellence, by which their own efforts may be guided in the different spheres in which they are engaged. If the standard is to be no higher than that which falls within the comprehension and performance of a village choir, no possible good can accrue to the clergy or the people in general, or to Trinity Parish—

which is expending such large sums of money. A psalm or hymn-tune may be very devotional, but a work of art, excellently performed, is much more so. It is the highest homage we can offer to Him who has blessed us with the talents and the abilities by which we can adore and praise Him with the best member that we have. To offer to the contemplation of a body, constituting the education and intelligence of the Episcopal Church, a wretched substitute of a hymn in place of the magnificent thought and mind of a musician like Spohr, is an insult to the common intelligence of the people at large, as well as to the clergy who already appreciate excellence in other schools of art outside that of the Church.

The question of sacred musical art is one of principle, not of personal convenience. Music in Trinity Parish has been used for many years past as a hobby on which many, totally unaccustomed to music as an art, have been riding for popularity. Music is an attractive thing, and fills the churches. Would it not then be well for the clergy, as many, though not all are anxious to do, of this parish to encourage it in a form which the Corporation of the parish has a right to expect, from the sums of money they expend on it. There is plenty of choral talent in the Trinity Parish, and men as organists who have been devoted to their art, and passed the highest collegiate standard. To them, then, the matter and its results must be left. They know to what perfection music can be brought. Their actions are not speculative. It is only those ignorant of the subject who are constantly making experiments over obsolete rubrics in use a hundred years since, when it was esteemed a sin to chant, and when no graduates in music had arrived to impart a better tone and system to the musical services of the Episcopal Church.

Signor Barili's Vocal Album.—This long promised book has at length appeared, numbers one and two having been published last week. It is got out in very beautiful form, and is clearly and elegantly engraved, and when completed will form a volume every way worthy of the acceptance of our lady amateurs. The two numbers published contain three pieces each. No. 1 contains *Le Preghiera di un Fanciullo*, The Child's Prayer, "Serenata Veneziana" a Venetian serenade, and *La Nuvoletta*, The Cloudlet. No. 2 contains *L'Angelo Del Bene*, The Angel of Mercy; *Conseils de Femmes*, A Woman's Advice, and *La Tortoella*, Dove, Gentle Dove. These songs are very marked in character, being rather Italian-German in style, than purely Italian. They are distinguished by thought and science, and are truly musicianly. The melodies are sustained and pure and the accompaniments are free and descriptive. We believe that Mr. Barili will make a great success with his Vocal Album.

The heir to the house of Erard, a nephew, was the other evening formally betrothed, and the occasion celebrated by a banquet at the Chateau de la Muette. Among the distinguished guests were Thalberg, Berlioz, Mme. Lubeck, and the venerable widow of Spontini.

WHAT THE THEATRES ARE DOING.

On Monday evening, November 11th, Plymouth Church, the business establishment of the Rev'd Henry Ward Beecher, broke loose from that locality and made an irruption on the New York Theatre.

The occasion of this inpouring was the introduction of a play entitled "Norwood," the joint production of Messrs. Augustin Daly and Joseph Howard, helped, in a very small degree, by the aforesaid Henry Ward Beecher of Plymouth Church.

"Norwood," it is unnecessary to say, is intended as a dramatization of the novel of that name, published in the *Ledger*. We have not read the novel, and, after seeing the play, we are rather glad we have not.

The scene of this "original, dramatic comedy," as the bills call it, is laid in the village of Norwood, and the first act stretches through a weary hour of domestic love-making, without incident, and without interest. The second act, in the same place, introduces us to the singular historical, theatrical assertion, that the President's proclamation calling for 75,000 men was preliminary to the fall of Sumter, and as a dramatic tableau, we are treated to the departure of the volunteers to the music of an air that was not composed until three years later.

The third act gives us a view of Fort Sumter, and we must express our thanks to the artists who have in this scene settled the true proportions of this famous fortress, and shown us that in 1861 it measured exactly 20 feet by 8, and 7 feet in height. There is also another historical fact settled, which is, that Sumter was manned and defended by volunteers from Norwood. We had always supposed, previous to this, that it was defended by men of the regular army, under Major Anderson, and fell before the enlistment of volunteers. There is another singular fact set right by this veracious history, which is, that news is brought in the second act that Sumter has been fired on, while the fort is not attacked until the third act.

In the fourth act, we are treated to the very improper spectacle of three young ladies meandering about the camp without any mothers to take care of them, and singing trios around the camp-fire. As this is only a question of propriety, and not one of fact, we have nothing to say about it; but still it strikes us as an improper place for them to be at night.

The fifth act takes us back to Norwood, and introduces us to a live turkey, though what connection this animal has with the story it is impossible to understand, unless it is as a successor to that pig which was the most attractive feature in Daly's dramatization of Reade's "Griffith Gaunt." If so, it failed to elicit rapturous applause, and though